

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 6131

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, UN

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS - WORLD OPIUM SITUATION

1. AIRPOUCHED NOV 16 TO WELLMAN (S/NM) IS REVISED VERSION OF INCB'S STUDY OF SITUATION WORLDWIDE RE AVAILABILITY OF OPIUM FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES. (TABLE VI HAS BEEN UPDATED AND OTHER TABLES MAY REQUIRE SOME ADJUSTMENT.) DITTERT INDICATES THAT BOARD'S CONSENSUS WAS THAT "EYE-CATCHING" REFERENCE SHOULD BE MADE TO STUDY AND CONCLUSIONS IN BODY OF INCB REPORT FOR 1973, WITH STUDY ITSELF ATTACHED AS ANNEX. THIS PROCEDURE REPRESENTED COMPROMISE BETWEEN BOARD'S MAJORITY WHO FAVORED STUDY'S INCLUSION IN REPORT AND MINORITY (NOTABLY, BARCOV AND KRISHNAMOORTHY) WHO OPPOSED.

2. WASH WILL NOTE THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT MODIFICATIONS IN CALCULATIONS IN THE UPDATED TABLE VI. THESE CHANGES WERE NECESSITATED AS RESULT BOARD'S RECEIPT FEW DAYS PRIOR TO ITS ADJOURNMENT OF INDIA'S ACTUAL 1973 OPIUM PRODUCTION FIGURES, WHICH, REPORTEDLY AS RESULT BAD WEATHER, ARE AROUND 200 TONS LOWER THAN PRODUCTION ESTIMATES. AS WASH WILL ALSO NOTE, REVISED TABLE SETS FORTH GOI OFFICIAL PRODUCTION ESTIMATE FOR 1974 AT 1139 TONS, WHICH DITTERT COMMENTS IS BASED ON AREA OF PRODUCTION AND MORE REALISTIC YIELDS AND MAY THEREFORE BE REGARDED AS MORE RELIABLE ESTIMATE THAN THOSE

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OF PREVIOUS YEARS.

3. UPSHOT NEW INFORMATION IS THAT INCB FORECASTS DEFICIT OF 179 TONS IN OPIUM REQUIRED FOR MEDICAL PURPOSES IN 1973. THIS FIGURE IS BASED ON GOVERNMENTS' UTILIZATION ESTIMATES MODIFIED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT AVERAGE OVERESTIMATES. DITTERT COMMENTS THIS MEANS THERE WILL BE SOME PROBLEM ABOUT OPIUM AVAILABILITY PRIOR TO NEXT AUTUMN WHEN 1974 CROP COMES ON MARKET. HOWEVER, SITUATION WILL PRESUMABLY BE EASED BY USG'S PLANNED RELEASES FROM STRATEGIC STOCKPILE TO MEET SHORTAGES IN THE UNITED STATES. DITTERT'S ASSUMPTION IS THAT THE SUPPLY OF POPPY STRAW COULD ALSO PRESENT DIFFICULTIES AND STEPS THEREFORE NEED TO BE TAKEN TO PERSUADE INDIA TO MOVE FORWARD PROMPTLY TO ARRANGE FOR PROCESSING OF ITS POPPY STRAW.

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